

Active Listening

Is attentive and intentional hearing, making a conscious effort to hear, understand and retain information that is being relayed to you.

It involves more than listening to the words that are being said.

Active listening involves a wide range of skills such as hearing, body language, verbal responses and non-verbal gestures.

Pay Attention

Why is Active Listening important?

Active listening encourages openness, honesty, and rapport; it shows the other person they are being heard and what they are saying matters to you.

- Give the person your undivided attention and acknowledge the message
- Look at the speaker
- Put aside distracting thoughts
- Avoid being distracted by environmental factors
- Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language

Show interest

- Use your own body language and gestures to show that you are engaged.
- Nod occasionally
- Smile and use other facial expressions
- Make sure that your posture is open and interested
- Timeliness between responses (wait if needed.. but not too long)
- Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and "uh-huh" (especially over the phone)

Provide Feedback

Respond appropriately

- Be candid, open and honest in your response
- Assert your opinions respectfully
- Treat the other person in a way that you think they would want to be treated.

- Reflect on what has been said by paraphrasing, for example:
- "What I'm hearing is..." "Sounds like you are saying..."
- Ask questions to clarify certain points
- "What do you mean when you say..." "Is this what you mean?"
- Summarize the speaker's comments periodically

Defer Judgment

- Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions
- Don't interrupt with counterarguments
- Be mindful of your own facial expressions and/or responses